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TWO LINGUISTIC TESTS OF THE RELATIVE ANTIQUITY OF THE *ILIAD* AND THE *ODYSSEY*

BY JOHN A. SCOTT

When Wolf sent a copy of his *Prolegomena* to Wilhelm von Humboldt, the latter replied to him; "Der cardo rerum liegt meines Erachtens bloss darin, dass in der *Ilias* wirkliche Verschiedenheiten des Styls, der Sprache, u.s.w. sein sollen. Bei diesen, glaube ich, hätten Sie anfangen müssen" (quoted by Geppert in his *Ueber den Ursprung der Homerischen Gesänge*, p. iii). This wise suggestion of von Humboldt's could not well be ignored, and so it has come about that one of the most vaunted proofs of diversity not only of authorship but of antiquity of the books of Homer has been the assumption of different and easily defined stages of linguistic development.

No single phase of language is better adapted for furnishing this test than the demonstrative article $\acute{o}$, $\acute{\eta}$, $\tau\acute{o}$, both because it is used so frequently and also because it shows in Homer all the different stages through which it passed from a pure demonstrative to a simple defining article. The demonstrative is the older, the article the later development, so, if the demonstrative use is predominant in certain books, the articular in others, the belief is justified that the books were written at different periods, and thus also by different poets.

The use of the definite article has furnished one of the chief arguments for the comparative lateness of the *Odyssey*; cf. Monro in his *Odyssey, Books XII-XXIV*, p. 332: "The defining article is much more frequent in the *Odyssey*." The use and extension of the definite article in Homer has been the subject of repeated publications; three of which cover practically the same ground and reach essentially the same results.

Any one of these three investigations should have shown how vain the attempt to separate the books of Homer on the basis of the defining article.

Hugo Koch in a pamphlet of forty pages, *De Articulo Homérico* (Leipzig, 1872), published a complete list of references to all the

examples of δ , η , $\tau\acute{o}$, in Homer, noting the use as demonstrative pronoun, relative pronoun, or as defining article. No attempt was made to distinguish between the usage of the different books or poems, but the writer limited himself to giving a simple list of the different cases, genders, and numbers.

In addition to all these categories he noted as doubtful the examples where he could not decide whether the word was used as a demonstrative or a simple defining article. No statistics were given, but by adding up his various lists I find that he assigns 422 examples of the definite article to the *Iliad*, 214 to the *Odyssey*. I have omitted from these figures all forms which he regarded as doubtful.

The results reached by Koch are practically the same as those reached independently by Miss F. Melian Stawell and published in her *Homer and the Iliad*, pp. 278 ff. Miss Stawell gives 218 examples of the definite article in the *Odyssey*.

As she divided the *Iliad* into Original *Iliad* and Additions, and did not give full statistics for the Additions, her figures are not complete, but, even so, she gives about 400 examples of the definite article in the *Iliad*. The fact that Miss Stawell makes one *Odyssey* and two *Iliads*, the bounds of which are constantly shifting, seems to me to detract greatly from the force and value of her statistics, especially since for the assumed Additions she did not feel it necessary to give all the examples, but only the "bulk." Since publishing this book Miss Stawell has enlarged the scope of the Original *Iliad* with a corresponding contraction of the Additions. Cf. *Zeitschrift für das Gymnasialwesen* (1910) 387.

Nevertheless the publication of her results should silence the argument based on the supposed increasing use of the definite article in the *Odyssey*.

A pamphlet *Ueber den Artikel bei Homer* (Adam Stummer, Schweinfurt, 1886) contains by far the fullest and ablest treatment of this subject which I have seen. Stummer wrote it under the direction of Professor von Christ, and was completely dominated by the latter's theories of the older and later portions of the *Iliad*. Stummer believed in a more restricted use of the definite article than Koch and assigned to a place among demonstrative pronouns many

of the examples of the definite article of the latter. His figures are as follows: The definite article is found in the *Iliad* 218 times, against Koch's 422; definite article in the *Odyssey* 171 times, against 214. However, they agree in this, that each assigns the greater number to the *Iliad*. Stummer never refers to Koch and seems to have been unacquainted with his work.

Stummer tried to fit his statistics to von Christ's theory of the *Uriliad*. Cf. p. 56: Number of verses in the original *Iliad* 8,981, examples of definite article in original *Iliad* 125, that is one definite article in each 72 verses; verses in additions to the *Iliad* 6,712, examples of definite article in additions to the *Iliad*, 93, or one definite article in each 72 verses. That is, *the Uriliad and the additions show exactly the same ratio in the use of the definite article*. No wonder Stummer felt his pamphlet did not prove anything. The reviewer, Vogrinz, in *Bursians Jahresbericht* 46, 189, says, "Aus den Zahlenverhältnissen, die uns geboten werden, ergiebt sich kein so überwältigendes Resultat als man gern hätte und als Hentze anzunehmen geneigt scheint."

To continue with the figures given by Stummer: entire *Iliad*, verses 15,693, definite article 218, one to each 72 verses; entire *Odyssey*, verses 12,110, definite article 171, one to each 71 verses.

In the entire *Iliad* *ὁ, ἡ, τό*, as demonstrative pronoun, 3,000 times; as definite article 218 times, or in a ratio of 14:1. In the *Odyssey*, as demonstrative pronoun, 2,178, as definite article 171, or in a ratio of 13:1.

The three poems assigned to Hesiod have 2,330 verses, the definite article occurs in them 62 times, or one in 36 verses; *ὁ, ἡ, τό* as a demonstrative pronoun 404 times, as a true definite article 62 times, or in a ratio of 7:1. In the five greater Homeric Hymns there are 1,914 verses with 57 examples of the definite article, or one in each 33 verses, *ὁ, ἡ, τό* as demonstrative pronoun 217 times, as a true definite article 57 times, or in a ratio of 4:1.

To restate these important facts in a brief summary: *Iliad*, one definite article to each 72 verses; *Odyssey*, one definite article to each 71 verses; Hesiod one definite article to each 38 verses; Homeric Hymns one definite article to each 33 verses. Ratio of the use of *ὁ, ἡ, τό* as a demonstrative pronoun to the use as a pure definite

article: *Iliad* 14:1; *Odyssey* 13:1; Hesiod 7:1; Homeric Hymns 4:1.

There could be no more cogent reason than these statistics for assigning the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the *Uriliads*, and the additions to a single period, a period widely separated from the time of the origin of the poems of Hesiod and the Homeric Hymns. Such was the spell or pall cast by disintegrating criticism that Stummer, von Christ, and the reviewer passed coldly by these important results and saw nothing in them but a failure to reach anything of value.

Higher criticism simply blindfolded Homeric investigators. From the above figures it is clear that the distance from Homer to Hesiod is many times greater than the distance from Hesiod to the Homeric Hymns, while the advance from the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey* is just that which might easily be made within the life of one man. Not only is it impossible to separate the *Iliad* from the *Odyssey* on the basis of the definite article, but however plausible the test when applied to individual books, as for example to K, the Doloneia, it breaks down at last, since *Odyssey* α and ω, two of the most despised books in Homer and presumably the latest, show the most restricted use of the definite article.

If the books of Homer could be dated by the use of the demonstrative pronoun as a definite article, then the oldest books would be *Odyssey* α, ζ, ω, the latest would be *Iliad* A, K, Λ, X, Ψ.

Whether the free use of the definite article as assumed by Koch and Miss Stawell or the restricted use of Stummer be accepted, there can be little doubt that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* belong to the same stage in the development of ὁ, ἡ, τό from a demonstrative pronoun to a definite article.

Another excellent test for the relative antiquity of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as well as for individual books, should be furnished by perfects in -κα, since these perfects are not of Indo-European but of Greek origin, and they show in existing Greek literature clear traces of their development from a sparing use in the singular indicative to a wide use in other moods and numbers. From the vast literature on this subject I select two works as sufficient for my purpose: Hirt *Handbuch der griechischen Laut- und Formenlehre* 471, "Das κ-Perfektum ist zweifellos eine griechische Neuschöpfung, deren

Entstehung und Ausbreitung wir noch einigermaßen verfolgen können. Das κ tritt zuerst im Singular auf bei den ursprünglich auf Vokal ausgehenden Formen"; Lobell, *Quaestiones de Perfecti Homericæ Forma et Usu* (Lipsiae, 1876), traces the development of the perfects in κ thus, pp. 23 f.: " κ in perfectum paulatim irrepsisse videtur hac via: (1) *a*, singul. pf. ind. conjunct. et plusq., *b*, verba contracta, exc. partic.; (2) participia verborum contractorum; (3) tertia persona pluralis ind.; (4) optativus; (5) participia verborum quae non sunt contracta."

Homer shows no further stages in the development of these perfects, since there are no examples of the infinitive, imperative, of the first or second persons in the plural of the perfect, and no plurals of any person in the pluperfect, and further Homer never has any perfects from consonant stems of the type found in *ἔφθαρκα*. Such a simple method for detecting late books in Homer could hardly have been neglected, and accordingly we find Monro and Leaf, each, in his Introduction to *K*, drawing an argument for the lateness of that book from the presence of certain verbs in *-κα*. I find that there are in the *Iliad* the following different verbs with a perfect in *-κα* (I quote in the form first appearing in the *Iliad*): *ἀδικοῦτες* *K* 98, *βέβηκας* *A* 37, *βεβίηκεν* *K* 145, *βεβλήκει* *Δ* 108, *βεβρωκώς* *X* 94, *δέδυκεν* *E* 811, *ἔστηκε* *Γ* 231, *κέκμηκας* *Z* 262, *μέμβλωκε* *Δ* 11, *μέμυκεν* *Ω* 420, *πεφύκει* *Δ* 109, *τεθαρσήκασιν* *I* 420, *τεθνήκασιν* *O* 664, *τέτληκας* *A* 228, *τετυχηκώς* *P* 748, *ὑπεμνήμυκε* *X* 491, *παροίχωκεν* *K* 252—17.

The following verbs in the *Odyssey* occur with perfects in *κα*: *ἀδικοῦτες* *μ* 281, *βεβίηκει* *α* 360, *βεβλήκει* *χ* 258, *βεβρωκώς* *χ* 403, *μέμβλωκε* *ρ* 190, *δεδαυκότες* *β* 61, *δεδειπνήκειν* *ρ* 359, *δέδυκεν* *μ* 93, *ἔσθήκει* *θ* 505, *πεφύκει* *ε* 63, *τέθνηκεν* *α* 196, *τέτληκε* *τ* 347, *τετύχηκε* *κ* 88—13.

The thirteen of the *Odyssey* bear about the same relation to the seventeen of the *Iliad* as the number of verses in the *Odyssey* to the number of verses in the *Iliad*, so that the *Odyssey* has one different verb with perfect in *κα* to each 931 verses, the *Iliad* one to each 923. I find the total number of all examples of perfects of this class in the *Iliad* is 85, in the *Odyssey* 55. The relatively larger number in the *Iliad* is due to the free use of *βεβλήκει*, *ἔσθήκει* in descriptions of

fighting, as these two forms are found in the *Iliad* 25 times, in the *Odyssey* but 8.

If we omit these two forms we find that one example of these perfects is found in the *Iliad* in each 261 verses, in the *Odyssey* one in each 258 verses.

Practically all of these examples belong to the singular of the indicative or the subjunctive, so it will be sufficient for the purposes of this paper to quote the forms which show a later development. According to Lobell, quoted above, the second stage in the development of the perfects in κ is found in the participle of contract verbs. There are three different participles of this class: $\acute{\alpha}\delta\eta\kappa\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ K 98, 312, 399, 471, μ 281, $\tau\epsilon\tau\upsilon\chi\eta\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$ P 748, $\delta\epsilon\delta\alpha\eta\kappa\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ β 61. Thus the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* have each two examples of these participles. The third stage is found in the use of the third plural of the perfect indicative; of this there are four examples: $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\kappa\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$ Δ 434, $\tau\epsilon\theta\alpha\rho\sigma\acute{\eta}\kappa\alpha\sigma\iota$ I 420, 687, $\tau\epsilon\theta\nu\acute{\eta}\kappa\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$ O 664, $\pi\epsilon\phi\acute{\upsilon}\kappa\alpha\sigma\iota$ η 114. $\pi\epsilon\phi\acute{\upsilon}\kappa\epsilon\iota$ is the reading of the last word in many of the best manuscripts. The fourth stage is found in the use of the optative; of this there is but a single example, $\beta\epsilon\beta\lambda\acute{\eta}\kappa\omicron\iota$ Θ 270. Here there are variant readings. The fifth stage is found in the use of the participle in other than contract verbs; of this there is one example, $\beta\epsilon\beta\rho\omega\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$ X 94, used also in the *Odyssey* χ 403. This marks the latest phase of the development of perfects in κ found in Homer, as the infinitive and first and second persons plural of the perfect and first, second, and third plural of the pluperfect do not occur. It will be noted that no examples of the third, fourth, or fifth stages of development are found in K, Ψ , or Ω , and but three, one of which is doubtful, are from the *Odyssey*. Here as in the case of the definite article we see how dangerous it is to base arguments on single books, since if perfects in κ be the basis for dividing the books of Homer, then the oldest books would be *Iliad* B, H, and *Odyssey* π . Since no one of these has a perfect of this formation, the latest books would be *Iliad* Δ , K, Π , and X, and, as in the case of the article, *Odyssey* α and ω would be near the oldest stratum. Taken as a whole the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* belong to the same period in a perfectly well-defined stage in the development of the perfect in $\kappa\alpha$. It seems to me incredible that two poems of such bulk could show such similar treatment of the

definite article and of the perfects in *κα* and themselves be separated by any appreciable interval of time.¹

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* belong to the same era of linguistic development, and whether they are the work of one poet or not they are surely the product of the same age.

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¹I have not added to the list of perfects in *κα*, *ιλήκησι φ* 365, since it is generally regarded as a present from a verb *ιλήκω*. I have omitted *δέδοικα*, found in both poems, since the shift in the vowels of the diphthong clearly mark it as a different formation. I have also not admitted *μέμυκεν μ* 395, since the *κ* is part of the root of the verb and is not an addition of the perfect stem.